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YVONNE VERDIER

Little Red Riding Hood in Oral Tradition*

The forgotten grandmother

Everyone knows the story of Little Red Riding Hood. It is the story of a wolf and a disobedient little girl with a simple lesson: "Little girl, don't stray from the path or you will meet the wolf and he will eat you!" This moral is stressed in two versions that have flourished. The first, which ends badly, was written at the end of the seventeenth century by Charles Perrault. It finishes, we recall, with the terse and terrible sentence: "With these words the wicked wolf leapt upon Little Red Riding Hood and gobbled her up" (Perrault 6). Parents typically accompany this ending with mock gestures of throwing themselves upon their children and pretending to devour them—thus provoking great bursts of laughter. The second version, which ends well, was transcribed by the brothers Grimm at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Here the hunter arrives on the scene to find the wolf sleeping after his meal. He takes out his scissors and cuts open the wolf's belly, releasing the two women. First Little Red Riding Hood, the last swallowed, jumps out fresh and alert crying: "Oh, how frightened I was! It was so dark in the wolf's body!" (Grimm 11). Then the old grandmother follows, much more distressed by her adventure and scarcely able to breathe. Little Red Riding Hood helps the hunter fill the wolf's belly with stones. On awakening he gets up and, weighed down by his heavy belly, collapses and dies. Little Red Riding Hood returns home—getting off, it seems, with a fright.[1]

But it is quite another story that the oral traditions of several French provinces have transmitted to us, which owe nothing, say the specialists, to

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*This translation of Yvonne Verdier's "Le petit chaperon rouge dans la tradition orale" from *Coutume et destin*, © **Editions Gallimard, Paris, 1995**, is published with permission in *Marvels & Tales*, Vol. 11, Nos. 1–2 (1997), by Wayne State University Press, Detroit, MI 48201.

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the printed version. Collected from the storytellers' own lips at the end of the nineteenth century in the Loire basin, the Nivernais, the Forez, the Velay, or more recently in the northern Alps, these versions contain motifs that have been entirely left aside by the literary tradition. This latter, moreover, derives exclusively from Perrault in so far as the version fixed by the brothers Grimm was collected in 1812 from a girl of bourgeois origins whose mother was French; likewise in as much as the oral tradition of "Little Red Riding Hood" has not been found in Germany, but is attested to only in a part of Italian Tyrol.[2]

Two particular episodes belong properly to the oral tradition. First of all the choice of roads offered the girl by the wolf when they meet: "What road do you wish to take," he says to her, "that of the pins or that of the needles?" Paul Delarue has noticed the constancy of this formula and gives the following commentary: "These absurd roads, which have surprised adults and provoked scholars, delight children, who find their existence in fairyland quite natural" ("The Story of Grandmother" 19). For Delarue it is a "puerile" detail, and Perrault would have dropped it for that very reason. In his version it is the wolf who takes charge of the business of the roads: "I will go by this path, and you by that path," he orders the girl. Marc Soriano, seeking to determine the origin of the Perrault version by examining those from oral tradition, falls in with Delarue's opinion: the alternatives proposed by the wolf would be only a game. "We may compare these absurd roads," he proposes, "with that game much appreciated by small children that consists of asking them if they prefer the bell or the button" (Soriano 157). A false choice then, since in both cases the roads are designated by objects equally prickly—one is as good as the other. This "marvelous" detail would not have been conserved by Perrault, continues Soriano, because "these surprising roads would have amused children, but would have appeared incomprehensible to other readers." To this we can respond that wordplay and puns play a fundamental role in peasant culture and quite particularly in oral tradition, which knows so many riddles (*devinailles*) with double meanings. In addition, the analyses of Delarue and Soriano are based on the false idea that the tales are aimed only at children. We must on the contrary take "these absurd roads" seriously, and ethnography can help us to clarify their meaning, in other words to understand the language of the pin and the needle.

A second motif, likewise absent from the Perrault version, is developed in all versions from oral tradition. This is the episode of the girl's cannibalistic meal. Inviting her to have something to eat, the wolf offers her the flesh of her grandmother for supper! Here occurs the motif of the "voice" that informs the girl of the actual nature of her dinner, but which she always misunderstands. Delarue qualifies this motif as "cruel and primitive," belonging to the ancient form of the tale, without other commentary. This time Perrault would have

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put it aside for this reason. Soriano is of the same opinion. Without going into Perrault's actual reasons, it is difficult to concur here since in his "Sleeping Beauty" he does not hesitate to develop the equally "cruel" and "savage" motif of the queen mother ordering her cook to serve her the hearts and livers of her grandchildren. We are not spared the least culinary detail, since she requires little Aurore prepared "à la sauce Robert," that is, with mustard and small onions.

Finally, if certain versions from oral tradition finish tragically as in Perrault—the wolf remaining alone on stage after devouring everyone—a number among them offer a happy ending, which nonetheless differs totally from that in the Grimm brothers' version. The ending of the Grimm version is itself considered a borrowing from the tale of "The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids" (AT 123; Grimm No. 5). And the difference is considerable, since the girl has not been eaten by the wolf at all. After being stuck in bed with him and engaging in the well-known dialogue, she asks for permission to go out and relieve herself. The wolf lets her go after tying a line (thread, cord, yarn, hair) to her leg. Once outside she undoes the line, cuts it or breaks it or attaches it to a tree, and flees. The wolf perceives the ruse after a moment and gives chase without success. Let us count the dead: the wolf and Little Red Riding Hood are safe; only the grandmother is good and dead. She has been twice consumed by the two survivors. In certain versions the story continues: the girl runs, the wolf at her heels; she comes to a river that she must cross; some laundresses on the opposite bank hold their sheet over the water permitting her to pass over. When the turn comes for the pursuer—the wolf—the laundresses offer him the same bridge, but when the wolf is halfway across they release the corners of their sheet, furnishing him with a shroud: he falls into the water and drowns. We have a new count: this time the wolf dies as well as the grandmother; only the girl survives. And an important point: in both cases the girl escapes from the wolf's jaws; as for the grandmother, we repeat, she is twice eaten.

On the other hand there is a motif that is characteristic of the Perrault version and is always absent from the folk versions: the girl's headgear, the famous red riding hood. This would be "an accessory trait peculiar to the Perrault version, not a general trait on which one could base oneself to explain the tale" (Delarue, "The Story of Grandmother" 18). This is the occasion for Delarue to sweep away the interpretations that rest on this detail, such as the mythological theory defended by Hyacinthe Husson, for whom "this adolescent crowned with the glow of morning light is a dawn" who, "journeying toward her grandmother, that is toward the dawns that have preceded her, is intercepted by the devouring sun in the form of a wolf." He likewise targets the ritualist thesis of Saintyves, who relies on the red headgear to make the girl a May queen and places the story in a calendrical context: the heroine is a sort of personification of the month of May, the wolf who devours her a representation of winter, and the

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story would have first been a commentary on a May ritual. This same argument is advanced by Delarue and taken up by Soriano to invalidate the psychoanalytic thesis of Erich Fromm, who bases his theory of the girl's menstruation on the cape of red velvet.

Once the motif of the red riding hood is eliminated as "accessory," that of the road of the pins or of the needles as "puerile," that of the grandmother meal eaten by the girl as "cruel and primitive," what remains? A bloodless Little Red Riding Hood, a cautionary tale, a warning for the guidance of children, a simple wolf story is what our authors, Delarue and Soriano, conclude in unison. Delarue's positivism takes him still further, so that the wolf is only a wolf, a real "flesh and blood" wolf, the wolf who has "actually seized and eaten so many children" ("Les contes merveilleux" 290). This attitude is in total contradiction with Perrault who concludes his tale with this epilogue:

> From this story one learns that children,
> Especially young lasses,
> Pretty, courteous and well-bred,
> Do very wrong to listen to strangers,
> And it is not an unheard thing
> If the Wolf is thereby provided with his dinner.
> I say Wolf, for all wolves
> Are not of the same sort;
> There is one kind with an amenable disposition
> Neither noisy, nor hateful, nor angry,
> But tame, obliging and gentle,
> Following the young maids
> In the streets, even into their homes.
> Alas! who does not know that these gentle wolves
> Are of all such creatures the most dangerous! (Perrault 6)

Delarue contradicts himself as well, since he classifies Little Red Riding Hood under the rubric of "marvel tale."

But following closely the versions from oral tradition, what quickly draws the attention is that in the majority of cases the girl is not eaten, while the grandmother always is, not only by the wolf but also, and most of all, by her granddaughter (at best they share equally). Indeed, many culinary details underlined by stylistic formulas[3] insist on the cannibalistic meal. In this context the story shifts and recenters around two characters, the girl and her grandmother rather than the girl and the wolf. The monster in the affair would be rather the girl—the wolf is only going about his business as a wolf. As for the grandmother, she would be the principal victim of the adventure, perhaps even the heroine of the story. Certain versions, entitled "The Story of Grandmother"

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(version 5, Nivernais), say as much. It looks as though our authors, the very ones who studied the versions from oral tradition, not knowing how to undo the weight of the written tradition, have thereby become deaf to the oral tradition. Fascinated by the wolf, they have forgotten the grandmother.

The proper use of pins

Let us listen to the whole story, following the versions from oral tradition. It is a fact—the red coiffure belongs only to the Perrault version. Oral tradition gives us a *petite fille* or a *fille* who has no name except in Touraine (version 13), where she is called Jeannette or Fillon-Fillette, presenting no characteristic clothing save in three versions where she wears iron shoes (version 20, Forez) or an iron dress (version 5, Nivernais; version 24, Velay). In these cases she is told that she can only return to her mother or her grandmother when these have worn out. So she rubs the dress against the walls in order to tear it or throws the shoes on the rocks until they break. This vestment motif is rather rare[4] and in relation to the brambles and stones of the roads may perhaps be understood in terms of the following motif. In fact in every case when she meets the wolf, she must choose between the road of the pins and that of the needles, the wolf bowing before her choice and taking the road she disdains. Numerous variants of the motif exist in such forms as: "le chemin des épinglettes ou des aiguillettes" (Haute-Loire), "thorns or needles," "little stones or pins" (Forez), "brambles or stones" (Vendée), "roots or stones" (Tyrol). At first sight one road or the other seems chosen by chance, both being provided with equally prickly, cutting or scratching objects. In the versions collected in the Dauphiné between 1950 and 1959 the choices divide evenly: four times she chooses the pins, four times the needles (Joisten). However in the three versions collected in the Velay by Victor Smith around 1874,[5] she chooses the road of the pins each time. From time to time she gives reasons for her choice: taking the pins in the Forez (version 19), she says it is to bring some to her grandmother. And in another version also from the Forez (version 21), she declares: "I like the road of the pins with which you can dress up better than the road of the needles with which you must work." In the Alps (Joisten) she chooses the needles, explaining that it is "to mend her dress, which is full of holes." In the Morvan (version 6) she makes the same choice, explaining: "I will take the road of the needles. I will gather some of those with the big holes for my grandmother who no longer sees clearly." To what do these various explanations refer then, at once mixing the gathering and gifts of pins, costume, mending and a grandmother's blindness. (See appendix 1.)

Far from being "absurd," these details constitute a language, a sartorial language of pins and needles that can be understood when replaced in the ethnographic context from which these versions come: the peasant society of the late nineteenth century. The tools of sewing in fact played an important

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role in the education of girls, as became apparent to us during the study of a small village in the Châtillonnais. In these villages girls were sent at age fifteen to spend one winter with the seamstress. This had less to do with learning to "work," to sew or to use needles, than with refining herself, with polishing herself and learning to adorn herself, to dress up. The seamstress expressed this by saying of her young apprentices: "They have been gathering pins." When they reached age fifteen, both the winter with the seamstress and the ceremonial entry into the age group consecrated to St. Catherine signified their arrival at *maidenhood (la vie de jeune fille),* that is, permission to go dancing and to have sweethearts, of which the pin seemed to be the symbol. It was by offering them dozens of pins that boys formerly paid court to girls; it was by throwing pins into fountains that girls assured themselves a sweetheart. Finally, it is the biological phenomenon itself, menstruation, making the girl into a *"jeune fille,"* with which the pin is associated. The properties of pins (they attach and are thus instruments of amorous attachment, but they prick and are then weapons of defense against too enterprising boys) are in accord with those attributed to menstrual blood, an ingredient in love potions but also an obstacle to any sexual relation. In this context the pubescent girl could be defined as the carrier of pins. As for the needle, threaded through its eye, in the folklore of seamstresses it refers to an emphatically sexual symbolism: the seamstresses who sew "run" *(qui cousent "courent,"* that is, chase after men), they have the thread in the needle; "seamstress married, needle threaded" *("couturière mariée, aiguille echassée")* goes the saying; the game of "thread the needle" practiced by the women of Berry during mardi gras was accompanied by obscene couplets (see Verdier). Pins and needles cannot be confounded. The oral versions to which we refer were collected from storytellers living a traditional peasant life in the Loire basin, the Nivernais, the Forez, the Velay, or the Alps. In all these places, given the homogeneity of the customs that govern the individual life cycle throughout France, the language of the pin and the needle was doubtless understood, and the pin would have been perceived as a symbol of the arrival at puberty, at maidenhood. Moreover the versions are numerous that specify the girl's departure in the context of activities particular to age groups in peasant society, allowing us to determine the age of Little Red Riding Hood. So in this version from the Velay (version 25) the girl is "affermée"—that is, hired out to a farm—to watch two cows: "When she had finished her time, she left. Her master gave her a small cheese and a loaf *[pompette]* of bread: 'Here, *ma petite,* take this to your mother, this cheese and this loaf, it will be your supper when you reach her.' The little girl takes the cheese and the loaf. She went into the wood and met the wolf, who said to her: 'Where are you going, little girl?' 'I am going to my mother's. I have finished my hire.' 'They pay you?' 'Yes, they paid me—they even gave me a small loaf and a cheese.' "

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Then follows the question of the roads—she "takes the side of the pins." The same question arises when the girl is dressed or shod in iron. There again she is hired out or in service, but it is specified that "she has not seen her mother in seven years." So she is dressed in iron and told that she cannot leave and visit her mother until she has worn out her costume, which she tries to do by rubbing it against the walls and the stones of the roads. Armor of childlike "innocence" whose rending signals the moment to depart? The children are always hired out at age seven, and the time of their employment as herdkeeper—the time of childhood—generally finishes at age fourteen, when another time begins, that of youth. This is marked by the taking of another costume, lighter and more becoming: shoes replace clogs, but the girl's hair must thenceforth be imprisoned under a coiffe bristling with pins. And they go to spend a winter with the seamstress, first breach of their "innocence."

What the motif of the road of the pins or of the needles gives us then is an indication of the state of the characters. We have a little girl who takes the road of the pins to dress herself up, the road of her puberty, and a grandmother who has already passed that way; she is at the needles, and even at the needles "with large holes" since "she no longer sees clearly." The story can now be told thus: a girl is sent on the road of the pins, that is, in sewing apprenticeship, upon arriving at puberty. The pins for dressing up are opposed to the needles associated with work and the mending of torn dresses, and also with needles with large holes (worn? having already served much?) used by old women, by grandmothers who *no longer see clearly*. This precisely defines the *state* of the grandmother, since if the language of the pin and the needle can be understood as we propose, the language of sight, the gaze, can be understood in the same traditional rural context. *To see* in fact means to have one's period; *to no longer see* is to no longer menstruate. So we have here a story that takes place between a pubescent maiden and an old menopausal woman, between a girl and her grandmother, and the term "petite fille" carries no indication of size, but is to be taken in its genealogical sense (that is, granddaughter) like the corresponding kin term "grand-mère" (grandmother).

Examining the variants in the name of the road leads to the same conclusions: *pierrettes*, thorns, brambles scratch, prick, cut, and conform with the bloody symbolism of the pins; just as pins, *pierrettes* or small stones were offered to or rather thrown at girls by boys paying court in Provence.[6] Even if the road chosen is not always bristling with such pointed objects, it is always marked. The girl collects strawberries (Alps, version 5) or flowers as in the brothers Grimm version, likewise metaphors for puberty (the pubescent girl is "in flower"). It is these flowers, this red fruit, or these pins that she declares she wants to take to her grandmother, as if it were of great importance to signal her puberty to her grandmother. We might conclude from this that the motif of the red hood

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introduced by Perrault has the same meaning as the pins. Since both are in a sartorial register, would not the two motifs say the same thing and mutually exclude each other? We could then accord to Saintyves the credit for relating the motif of the read headgear to the crown of roses worn by girls in the month of May, making of Little Red Riding Hood a girl dedicated to the month of May, in the last analysis a pubescent girl, since May is the month dedicated to female puberty.[7]

A fortifying meal

Once she arrives at her grandmother's, the girl is invited by the wolf to have something to eat—or rather upon entering she herself announces that she is hungry, then thirsty (then sleepy). He tells her to take some meat from the cupboard or the pantry and to pour herself a glass of wine. The scene is intimate, domestic. The wolf watches from the bed as she makes all the motions of preparing a meal, takes out the ingredients, lights the fire, stirs the pots. If it is quite clear in all versions that the wolf eats his share of the grandmother, no trace of culinary art for him: he swallows her totally raw and knows quite well what he is doing.[8] The girl's meal, on the contrary, has all the characteristics of Atreus's feast: involuntary cannibalism—at least not conscious—and elaborate culinary preparation.[9]

With what sauce then is the grandmother eaten? Let us recall the wolf's deeds: he arrives, kills the grandmother, devours a part of her, bleeds her, puts the blood aside in a bottle, a glass, dish or bowl, and stores the flesh in the pantry or cupboard. In one version he puts her head on a plate; in another he puts aside the bones to serve as kindling for the girl. He undertakes a regular dismemberment, of which a version from Italian Tyrol gives all the macabre details: "He [here an ogre plays the part of the wolf] came in, killed and devoured the old woman, and went to bed. But previously he had hung the intestines of his victim on the door in place of the latchcord, and he had placed the blood, the teeth and the jaws in the buffet."

And the dialogue of the deaf begins on the doorstep: "The girl wanted to open the door, but noticing that she pulled on something wet and limp, she said, 'Oh, grandma, this thing is wet!' 'Just pull and be quiet—those are the intestines of your grandmother.' 'What did you say?' 'Just pull and be quiet!' "[10]

Then follows the culinary episode involving the girl. Either the wolf proposes that she eat what is already cooking on the fire, or more often he asks her to take the meat in the cupboard and cook it, meat that is none other than the grandmother's flesh. At the first mouthful the horror of her deed is signaled immediately to the girl: "You are eating the flesh of your grandma!" Next the blood is consumed in one of two forms. She may drink it as wine, while a voice murmurs to her: "You are drinking the blood of your grandma!"

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Or in various versions, one from Touraine and an entire series from the Upper Alps, she cooks it in the pan. The culinary technique is well indicated, since while cooking it she hears:

Fricon, fricasse
Le sang de ta grantasse [your grandma's blood].

Or again:

Fricon, fricasse
Le sang de ta mérasse [your mother's blood].

Twice the recipe calls for blood pudding, and the formula then becomes:

Fricon, fricasse
Les boudins de ta garantasse [your grandma's blood pudding].

From the beginning of the episode it will be noted that the culinary code is unequivocal. It is none other than that of pork, from the slaughter to the cooking. The tasks are properly divided. Masculine duties: the wolf kills, bleeds and saves the flesh as though preparing to salt it. Feminine duties: the girl cooks. Blood fricasseed right in the pan and blood pudding are the two exclusive forms for preparing pig's blood, and their consumption is associated with the "sacrifice" of the beast. *Fricassée* in certain regions designates both the technique (sauté in the pan) and the dish, as well as the portions distributed to relatives and neighbors the day of the "sacrifice." This includes "a plate garnished with a morsel of blood pudding arranged in a circle with morsels of liver, heart and belly in the center, the whole covered with a little cap (peritoneum)" (see Marchenay 118, 120). So the term *fricassée*, along with the blood that is the main ingredient, also suggests the consumption of certain organs—the liver and the heart.

So if the wolf partially devours the grandmother, the stress is here put on the girl's meal, a meal doubly mediated by the use of utensils (glass, bowl, dish) and by cooking. Flesh makes flesh and wine makes blood, says the proverb, recalling the wine-blood equation of the tale, but also showing that this is actually an incorporation of a grandmother by her granddaughter. In this incorporation blood, whether taken as wine or as fricassee, is always mentioned. Concerning the flesh, two versions specify the portions that the girl ingests. In one Tourangelle version the voice sings to her: "You are eating my *titine*, my daughter!" (*Titine* meaning teats, breasts, adds the collector in a note.) And in a version from the Alps:

The moment it began to simmer, the wolf said from the bed:
Fricon, fricasse
Les tétons de ta meirinasse [the teats of your godmother].[11]

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If the culinary code for pork indicates the sacrificial character of the meal, as though the grandmother were sacrificed by the wolf for the child, the parts that she takes in, blood and breasts, are none other than the organs of female procreation and specify the meaning of the sacrifice. After the "puberty" motif of the pins, this phase of the story would then concern the girl's acquisition of the capacity to procreate. Hence the motif of Little Red Riding Hood's macabre meal can be understood in terms of feminine destiny played in three stages: puberty, motherhood, and menopause. The three stages correspond to three genealogical classes: daughter, mother, grandmother. From society's point of view, then, the reproductive cycle is completed when a woman becomes a mother, and her mother thereby becomes a grandmother: the game is played by three. The day of her puberty a girl already partially eliminates her mother, still more the day she knows the sexual act, and definitively when she procreates. The mother is replaced to the degree that her daughter's genetic functions are affirmed. But this is also a vampiric image proposed here: when the blood flows for the girl—first condition of her genetic destiny—it must leave the mother, who finds herself deprived of the ability to have children, as though drawn from one vessel to another. And the tale says more: the girl takes this power from her mother by conquest, she literally imbibes it. Moreover the tale sometimes confuses, as if by a shortcut, the genealogical levels of mother and grandmother, and it is very often the mother who plays the role of grandmother and is eaten. We also frequently find the aunt or the godmother, the latter indicating the social and symbolic dimension that we must ascribe to the tale. For the godmother, who in peasant society is precisely the grandmother or the aunt, is the one who watches over the girl's development. She gives her her sewing kit when she is fourteen or takes her in for her sewing apprenticeship, and gives her jars and pots on her wedding day. The social figure of the biological mother, she is charged with transmitting feminine goods.

So what the tale tells us is the necessity of the female biological transformation by which the young eliminate the old in their own lifetime. Mothers will be replaced by their daughters and the circle will be closed with the arrival of their children's children. Moral: grandmothers will be eaten.

A game of hide-and-seek

And the wolf? What becomes of him in the tale? He appears to be there to show the road and to orchestrate the carnage. Apparently he can devour (sleep with) everyone—the grandmother or the girl. Meeting the girl and learning of her errand, he rejoices in advance, say some versions, over devouring both. In contrast to the women of the tale, he has no well specified genealogical status,[12] yet he is the very condition of the fulfillment of their destiny. The tale is clearly saying to girls: "You will be eaten by the man," moreover he (is not the wolf

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always masculine?) will have already eaten (raw to be sure, and without much of an eye for the difference) your mother or your grandmother. There was in fact a kind of sexual initiation in passing for the girl who, we recall, had just eaten the fricasseed sexual organs of her mother or grandmother. This emerges clearly from the undressing scene that precedes her going to bed, well developed in this Nivernais version:

> "Undress, my child," said the *bzou*,[13] "and come and sleep beside me."
>
> "Where should I put my apron?"
>
> "Throw it in the fire, my child; you don't need it any more."

And she asked where to put all the other garments, the bodice, the dress, the skirt, and the hose, and the wolf replied:

> "Throw them in the fire, my child; you will need them no more."

The same episode is treated more rapidly and symbolically in this version from the Velay (version 24), where the undressing is simultaneous with dinner. When the cat whispers to the girl that she is eating her mother's flesh, the wolf says: "Throw your shoe at him, my dear, throw your shoe at him." Next, when the bird sings to her that she is drinking her mother's blood, the wolf interjects: "Throw your coiffe at him, my dear, throw your coiffe at him." Thus she is stripped of her essential clothing—cast off with her virtue—and she goes to bed with the wolf. Does the wolf then simply provide a service in this story that seems to unfold mostly among women? Things get still more complicated in bed when the dialogue is engaged.

The girl's questions or exclamations almost invariably concern the hairy aspect of her bedpartner—at least this is the object of her first question (Velay, version 25): "Ah! *maman,* but you are hairy!" Or (Nivernais, version 5): "Oh! grandmother, but you are hairy!" Or yet (Velay, version 26): "What a long beard you have!" Or (Haute Loire, version 22): "Ah! mother, what long whiskers you have!" Or (Nièvre, version 4): "Ah! grandmother, how you are covered with hair!" Or (version 32): "*Mon Dieu*! grandma, you have such hair on your legs!" And the wolf answers almost systematically: "It's from age, my child, it's from age." But the wolf, we recall, is in drag; he has taken the grandmother's place, put on her bonnet, even her glasses. So why not take him at his word? Let us take him then for what he pretends to be, the grandmother, in whose guise he shows himself to the girl. She finds herself with a very hairy grandmother, that is, provided with a masculine physical trait whose cause is attributed to old age. The dialogue from one Italian version gives some details on the reasons for this transformation: "The little girl slipped into the bed. When she felt her grandmother's hand, she said: 'Grandmother, why do you have such a hairy

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hand?' 'It's because of all the years my husband made me bear.' Then she felt the arms: 'Why are they so hairy?' 'It's from having worked too much.' She felt the chest: 'Why all this hair?' 'From nursing too many young.' 'And this hairy belly?' 'From having too many children' " (Delarue, "Les contes merveilleux" 258).

So here the hairy element is associated with deterioration, with the wearing out of the female reproductive faculties: because of the years my husband made me bear, from having too many children, from nursing too many! If we take the wolf at his word, does he not figure as the old woman herself who, stripped of her ability to have children, of all her feminine attributes—her menstrual blood, her breasts, her womb—is covered with hair and has become a man or a wild beast? Rather than wolf-as-grandmother, as he has become known, are we not dealing with grandmother-as-wolf? Two versions tend to corroborate this hypothesis: the Tourangelle version cited above, where it is no wolf that the girl meets, but "an ugly man leading a sow" who moreover pursues her to the river "mounted on his big sow." A sow-man, we could say, corresponding to the wolf grandmother by an inversion of terms! Under these conditions the animal and the grandmother make a single personage, he being in a sense only a trait qualifying her. The game is now played by only two, as was our impression at the beginning of this article: the girl becoming woman and the grandmother losing her femininity, becoming masculine or bestial. In truth a version with only two personages exists where an orphan girl goes to her grandmother's in the woods, who is revealed to be the "femme sauvage" and who intends to eat her.[14] This wolf-grandmother, this sow-man, this wild woman would all thus be inhabited by a cannibalistic desire to eat their grandchildren. So here we are faced with the inverse of the motif derived explicitly in the first analysis: grandmothers, if you let them, would gladly eat their grandchildren as in "Sleeping Beauty." We can thus nuance the moral of the tale: if granddaughters must eat their grandmothers, it is because the latter want to eat them.

Yet it is perhaps too hasty to finish with the wolf by letting ourselves be taken in by his illusionist game and go no further with him. If this game completes his character, if even, as we have just seen, the tale sometimes appears to confound him with the grandmother, the game is nonetheless played well with three. If he is this occult personage who does not show his true face but plays hide-and-seek, goes in drag, masquerades, changes his voice to the point of making himself invisible, the wolf is nevertheless present under his mask at every transformation of the girl. At the crossroads when she chooses the pins, he is at the origin of the choice; it is when she is face to face with him, under his gaze and at his demand, that she incorporates her grandmother and undresses. This is as much to say that he leads the game and conducts the girl toward each stop in her feminine destiny, which is realized through him. But each time he makes use of his actor's gifts and plays the comedy, jovial, flirting like a young

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man as she takes the road of the pins and playing the old lady to perfection at the second meeting. Faceless by dint of mime, he conceals himself. Until then the girl lets herself be taken, not seeing any danger. In fact his true nature, his wolf's nature to be fierce and dangerous, will be revealed in the a test of truth we might say. "Come lie beside me," he said, "my feet are cold. You will keep me warm" (version 25). Or: "Come lie up against me" (version 32). At this intimate contact the wolf can no longer fool anyone—the hair, the fur covering him from head to foot, felt beneath the covers, betrays him—the mask falls, the wolf is "laid bare," the girl "sees the wolf." (See appendix 2.)

The wolf's duplicity is thus complete. Among wild animals he is the closest to men, the most similar by his conduct, his subtlety, his mores, and even by the war he wages against them by attacking their herds like a brigand. And men give him his due, for the war they make on him is more than a hunt; he is not game, it is not his meat they want, it is his skin. Even his death is exemplary:

> He regards us yet, then lays back down,
> All the while licking the blood from his mouth,
> And disdaining to know how he has perished,
> Closing his great eyes, dies without a cry . . .
> How we ought to depart from this life and all its ills,
> It is you who know, sublime animals. (Alfred de Vigny, *La mort du loup*)

He lives with his own in a pack, and it is solitude or famine that makes him wicked, since: "Wolf eats no flesh of wolf." But: "When the wolf eats his companion / Lacking to eat in forest and glen." Yet at the same time he remains and will always remain the fierce and carnivorous animal: "The wolf is always the wolf." "The wolf will die in his skin."[15] Hence "the wolf among the savage beasts has been to us either so common or so odious that more than any other animal we have drawn several proverbs from him."[16] It is precisely this duplicity that brings him close to man, and if we attribute this masquerade to the wolf, we also attribute it to man. Witness in numerous regions the belief in werewolves (*loup-garous*), men or women who at night metamorphose into wolves by donning his skin and devour all whom they meet, beasts and people, in the course of long nocturnal prowls. Finally, without rehearsing the entire mythology of wolves, we may recall the diverse calendrical ceremonies of the ancient world, in the course of which wolf disguises were worn, such as the famous ceremony of the Green Wolf of Jumièges (Gaignebet and Laurentin 40–41), or the custom in some regions for the young folk to disguise themselves as wolves for Carnival. The disguise is sufficiently common that the very name *loup* is given to the demimask of black satin worn at the masked balls of high society.

This crossplay of antithesis between the wolf and the man conditions his status as enemy, an enemy within (is he not found in the sheepfold?), which

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presents us with a mirror view of the cruelty of human relations in general—*homo homine lupus*. But more significantly to the girl he is "l'ennemi révélateur,"[17] the one who reveals to her her own true nature, her woman's destiny. Taking her by the hand, he shows her the road, and she will let herself be guided, not as a victim—consenting only out of ignorance—but as the blindfolded fiancée, to the discovery of this destiny, from pins to fricassee right into his bed. A destiny stamped by his style and unveiled in its full crudity, which makes women rivals among themselves, makes them devour each other, and throws them ineluctably into the wolf's jaws.

And the cake? Who ate the cake?

A somewhat ironic question, if not facetious,[18] which the child never fails to ask, left with Little Red Riding Hood swallowed up shortly after her grandmother. We know that the girl did not set forth empty-handed; she brought an appetizing cake (*galette*). In the versions that occupy us, it is not always Perrault's cake and little pot of butter, but products perfectly compatible: *pain amélioré*, the local form of *galette*, confected by adding sugar, butter, and eggs to the bread dough and cooked at the edge of the oven the day bread is made, called *pompe* in the Velay, *époigne* in the Nivernais, and *fouace* in the Alps. Associated with this cake is usually a dairy product: a pot of cream in the Nivernais, or the local cheese—*tomme* in the Alps, *fromazeau* in the Velay. More rare is the mention of a third product: a small pot of honey in the Alps, or, also in the Alps, eggs associated with the butter and cheese. Set forth in a formula are more numerous gifts in the Indre (version 12):

> A loaf, leaven, a grape
> and an apple in your bosom.

Always food is sent to the grandmother by the intermediary of the granddaughter.[19] The mother prepares the food: "Now that her *maman* had baked in the oven, she had made some *galettes*" (Hautes-Alpes; Joisten), she asks her daughter to bring them to her grandmother. So in the Nivernais (version 4) the mother "each week, the day she baked her bread, made an *époigne* and told her daughter, you will carry the *époigne* to your grandmother." More simply yet in the Hautes-Alpes, the girl is charged with carrying her dinner to her grandmother in Fontenil (another hamlet in the same commune). So the girl's errand seems quite ordinary, everyday, in the village context: bringing their food to the elderly is part of the service rendered by children. More generally the circulation of food between households—of consecrated bread, for example—is carried out by them. This circulation brings into play three personages: the one who gives, the one who transports, the one who receives. The role of transporter being given to children, the equation of food exchange in our tale

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should be written thus: she who prepares—the mother; she who carries—the granddaughter; she who receives—the grandmother. But the grandmother will not receive her supper—curiously enough it disappears in the course of the story, and the child is quite right to ask: "What happened to the cake? What happened to the little pot of butter?"

Georges Dumézil has formulated a hypothesis about the origin of the tale founded precisely on the disappearance of the little pot of butter, a hypothesis which, backed up by other features, leads him to see in this story an "ambrosian adventure" (Dumézil 189–90). The little girl in the red hood, glowing with courage, recalls the goddess Nantosuelta who, in Gaulish sculpture, has the attributes of a cup and a horn of plenty. The wolf he links to Sucellus, the Gaulish god who, carrying a club in one hand and a small pot in the other, is always represented as bearded and shaggy, a wolf's skin thrown over his shoulders. As for the little pot of butter, it would figure as the mysterious ambrosian nutriment born of the churning sea, and that is what is found in the hands of Sucellus. The tale is marked as an "ambrosian adventure" for Dumézil insofar as the wolf tries to steal the little pot of butter carried by the girl, once without success at the crossroads, but succeeding the second time when he dresses up as the grandmother—since it is by thus disguising himself as a woman that the Indo-European god steals the ambrosia. The story of Little Red Riding Hood would be a final echo of a Gaulish version of the ambrosia cycle. Let us note that Dumézil's thesis parallels at some points that of Saintyves, likewise founded on the little pot of butter: May butter cannot be said to confer immortality, but it has magic virtues like all dairy products during that period.

There is no mention in our versions of what happens to the food carried by the girl, except in one version from the Forez (version 20). When she meets the wolf, he persuades her that her basket is too heavy and takes it from her; once arrived at her grandmother's, here is what she tells him: " 'I bring you some pins [she had gathered them along the road]. I was bringing you butter and cheese, but I met the wolf who took them from me. I was afraid he would eat me, and I gave them to him.' 'You did well,' " responds the wolf-grandmother. The theft thesis defended by Dumézil, if it is only confirmed in one unique version, nonetheless puts the accent on an important point: the food destined for the grandmother does not reach its goal. Whether it was spirited away by the wolf, or much more often forgotten in the course of the story, in all cases the grandmother will not be fed. This then is the indication that the girl no longer plays her child's role as food carrier. In fact she does something else entirely: she disrupts every term in the circulation of food—she takes her mother's place as cook and her grandmother's as she who eats. And all she manages to bring as "food" to her grandmother are a few pins gathered beside the road.

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The house in the forest

So what has this girl come to do at her grandmother's? To conquer her femininity, to learn the laws of her destiny? Does our tale then treat of the theme of initiation? Let us take a closer look at the itinerary and the locales. The girl enters a house deep in the woods at the end of the road, along which she gathers pins. This house is often said to be dark—it is even sometimes a cave (Italian version). Its door opens with difficulty or according to a complicated system to which only the grandmother knows the code. The girl exits most often safe and sound after accomplishing a number of things: cooking, eating her grandmother, lying, sleeping with the wolf.

Let us see how one enters, how one leaves, and when one leaves. The girl's entry into the house is always marked, as in Perrault's version, with the mysterious "Pull out the peg and the latch will fall," or the diverse terms repeated in some oral versions: "Pull the cord and the latch will lift" (Gascony, version 27); or again: "Turn the bolt *[tricolète],"* (Velay, version 25). Whatever the formula, the girl is always obliged to find her own way in, following the spoken instructions of her wolf-grandmother who, pretending to be sick in bed, cannot get up to let her in. In a version from the Upper Loire (version 22), the passage from the doorstep takes a special turn: "When the little girl arrives, she calls to her mother from the entry that the door is locked. The wolf lying in the woman's bed responds to the girl: 'Come through the cat door *[chatouneyre]* where the black hen just came in!' 'Ah! my mother, I have just passed my feet through, the rest will pass as well. *Ça va bien.'* "

To pass feet first, we know, is an expression without ambiguity and signifies a inverted birth, an entry into the world of the dead (see Belmont). This singular and telling mode of entry is linked to the mode of exit from the house common to a whole series of versions, in particular from the Nivernais, where she escapes under pretext of relieving herself, a thread attached to her leg.[20] Once outside she releases herself by attaching the thread to a tree, by breaking it or by cutting it with scissors like the umbilical cord of a newborn. Is this not, following an entry like unto death, an exit like unto birth? Sometimes the exit episode is redoubled and follows more closely the birth rites that can be observed in traditional peasant society. As remarked above, in some versions the story continues. The wolf, perceiving the ruse, gives chase. The girl encounters an obstacle in her path, a river where laundresses are doing their wash *(bui)*. By holding a sheet over the water, they permit her to cross the river and she is safe.[21] When the wolf's turn comes, they let go of the sheet, he falls into the water and drowns. This double role held by the laundresses—on the one hand allowing the girl to pass, thereby rescuing her, on the other drowning the wolf, killing him—is consistent with their role in the social reality of the village. In fact the

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job of assisting in "passages," of helping in childbirth and helping people to die, is held—at least in the Châtillonnais—by one and the same person, an aged woman, a woman who can at the same time handle the swaddling and the shroud, who washes infants as she washes the dead, a woman whom we can identify as a laundress (*laveuse;* Verdier 83–156). If the laundresses bring about the death of the wolf, they bring about the birth of the girl.

The trip to the grandmother's little house thus presents all the characteristics of an initiatory visit, witness the fashion whereby one enters and exits: entry lived as death, exit as birth. There the girl is instructed in her feminine future, an instruction that unfolds according to a perfect progression by means of diverse technical apprenticeships. On the road she receives the preliminary sewing lesson, associated with the life of a maiden. In the house the procreative faculties of her grandmother are passed on to her through the apprenticeship in cooking, occupation of mothers and wives. Following this comes the sexual initiation itself, in the arms of the wolf. Finally by her passage with the laundresses, she finds herself introduced to a third fundamental feminine knowledge: the laundry, the technique of childbirth, the technique of old women.

A wolf too popular

So the girl has not been wasting time in going to visit her grandmother! Initiated into her destiny as a woman, instructed in all the arts of domestic life, she can return home. If she has "seen the wolf," we can no longer accept the moral given in the version written by Perrault. The feminine destiny that the oral tradition speaks of is far from playing with the wolf as a unique partner.

In fact the tale brings into evidence the truth that women transmit among themselves the wholly physical faculty of procreation. Meanwhile the radical character of that transmission brings to light the conflictual aspect—rivalry that goes as far as physical elimination—of women's relations among themselves on this point. Classed in terms of the maturity of their bodies, women find themselves divided and unequal. Perhaps we can see here the principal source of the violence in their conflicts? A number of tales develop this confrontational struggle between women, whether between women of the same generation (the theme of the "substitute fiancée" comes to mind) or between women of different generations: mother and daughter, stepmother and stepdaughter, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, grandmother and granddaughter, old and young.

It is remarkable, moreover, that each stage in the conquest of the physiological capacities of feminine destiny is denoted by the acquisition of a technical skill. The sequence of apprenticeships follows a prescribed order: sewing for puberty, cooking for the procreative function, laundry for the hour of childbirth, all knowledge and techniques found in the hands of women in traditional peasant society. Veritable "cultural possessions" that the tale opposes to the ways

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of "nature" (the wolf devours raw), this knowledge gives women the vocation to "domesticate" these passages. This function underscores again the traditional power and autonomy of women over their destiny.

But if the oral tradition can still be understood in terms of peasant social life at the beginning of this century and is still approachable by village ethnography today, it remains for us to inquire about the fortune of the version written by Perrault. Without neglecting the role of the wolf as constant referent, we can legitimately oppose the insistence of the oral versions on the feminine functions, derived from the great importance attached to them in traditional peasant society (thus a tale centered upon the relations of intimate transmission between a grandmother and her granddaughter), to Perrault's tale, which privileges the relations of seduction between the wolf and the girl. What then has transpired so that the latter version became the "popular" version par excellence, so that this tale, constructed at the end of the seventeenth century as a warning to young girls ("Little girls, beware of the wolf"), has continued to flourish and is today propagated everywhere? By contrast the oral versions, bearing another moral ("Grandmothers, beware of your granddaughters"), have never gone beyond the fireside circles or the enclosed fields, have never come into the schools or the publishing houses, but have remained hidden in the mountains of the Nivernais, the Forez, the Velay, or the Dauphiné, rural landscapes where society remains "backward," completely "unpopular" from today's point of view.[22]

Let us observe first of all that this displacement of accent is not isolated. It would seem that today we have forgotten the last episode of Perrault's own version of "Sleeping Beauty." Here a girl is pricked by a spindle at the age of fifteen, falls asleep to be awakened by a prince who, after giving her two children, disappears, leaving her alone with her mother-in-law who tries to eat her two grandchildren and then her daughter-in-law. The theme of the cannibalistic mother-in-law, well developed in the tale, is dropped and the story ends at the arrival of Prince Charming. Here even Perrault has not been followed.[23] Likewise who remembers today—speaking of the repertory of tales that parents find in children's books—"The Fairies," a tale given by Perrault that clearly develops the theme of initiation[24]—again a story that unfolds among women! It is important to understand the "popularity" of Perrault's tales by way of the univocal and liminal figure of the "seducer" wolf and his other "romantic" facet, Prince Charming, this time the savior of young girls. Has society then become masculinized since the seventeenth century? Have the great powers and mysteries of the female body, celebrated in the old peasant societies, now come to be denied in the society that has taken their place? The question must be posed to historians. To substitute for a story of a grandmother a story of a wolf, to end "Sleeping Beauty" at the glorious arrival of Prince Charming, is not

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simple sleight of hand, but shows that we find ourselves in a society other than the one where girls must follow the road of the pins and eat their grandmother.

Translated by Joseph Gaughan

Appendix 1

"A little girl wearing a red wool tunic given her by her godfather is abducted by a wolf while out walking, careless of danger. He takes her to his den for his young to devour. But the cubs, before the decided air of the girl, forget their wildness and want to play with her and caress her head. 'Oh you mice,' says she, 'don't tear the dress that my godfather gave me.' "

This story—in Latin verse, *De puella a lupellis servata*—is related by Egbert of Liège around 1023 in his work *Fecunda ratis*. Paul Delarue notes that some have sought to see here, erroneously in his view, a primitive form of "Little Red Riding Hood" ("Les contes merveilleux" 237).

Appendix 2

She is lost then! In fact we cannot avoid relating this scene to the one evoked by Laisnel de La Salle (172) with regard to shepherdesses and wolves in Berry: "It passes as certainty," he reports, "that if on arrival the wolf sees the shepherdess before being seen, at that very instant she becomes hoarse to the point that she cannot cry out. Then but one resort is left her—but this resort is infallible—to take off her bonnet and to run at the wolf with her hair loose. By so acting she is sure to put him to flight. If on the contrary the wolf is the first perceived, he loses all power over the shepherdess and the herd." It is clear that in this game of who sees whom first—recalling the game of hide and seek, called *le loup* by children—the wolf in our tale has the advantage. He has seen the girl first, and she sees him too late. She will thus be eaten, the denouement—we recall—of numerous oral versions. But the technique employed by the Berry shepherdesses leaves no puzzle, since to remove one's bonnet, to let the hair scatter, is for a woman an act of extreme impropriety, a true violation of modesty. It amounts to becoming naked. The woman's nakedness would then put the wolf to flight? It seems that he is shamed. A similar act of feminine defense reported in *Les Evangiles des Quenouilles* likewise makes him flee in embarrassment: "If a woman sees a wolf following her, she must forthwith trail her sash on the ground behind her saying, 'Beware, wolf, lest the mother of God curse you,' and forthwith he will turn away quite embarrassed" (cited by Rolland 127).

It is said of a hoarse-voiced man that *he has seen the wolf*.

The sight of a wolf makes a man mute (Pays de Limoges).

"Has seen the wolf," said of a man who has lost his voice (Castres).

(Rolland 117)

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He has seen the wolf, said of a man with a cold.

He has seen the wolf, said of a seasoned man, who has seen the world, who has been around.

To have seen the wolf, when speaking of a girl, expresses that she has had amorous attentions (Littré).

If anyone sees the wolf before the wolf sees him, he will have no power to harm him, and likewise the person to the wolf (*L'Evangile des Quenouilles*).

The nature of the wolf is such that when a man sees him before he sees the man, the wolf loses all his strength and hardiness; and if the wolf sees the man first, the man loses his voice and cannot say a word (Richard de Fournival, *Bestiaire d'Amour*).

If the wolf can approach a person at seven feet and look him in the face, his breath makes the person so hoarse that he cannot cry out. (*L'Evangile des Quenouilles*).

Cited by Sébillot 24–25.

Notes

1. Translator's Note: I owe expressions of gratitude to many for whatever merits this translation may have. First and most of all, I must thank the author herself. I knew Yvonne Verdier briefly and was able to work with her before her untimely death. She was generous with her time and hospitality, and quite willing to discuss this translation with me during its early phases. Thanks are also due to Donald Haase and to Amy Greer, who read an early draft of this translation and made many helpful criticisms and suggestions. Useful comments and advice came likewise from Bruce Mannheim, Frances Trix, and Eileen Gaughan. Of course the many shortcomings that remain are my own responsibility.

   An invaluable aid to any consideration of this material is the book edited by Alan Dundes, *Little Red Riding Hood: A Casebook.* Along with a selection of scholarly commentary, it contains English translations of both the Perrault and the brothers Grimm version of the story. It also includes one of the more important oral versions discussed here, "The Story of Grandmother" (version 1) from the Nivernais region of central France, along with Paul Delarue's notes on the tale. Both story and notes can also be found in Delarue, *The Borzoi Book of French Folk Tales*. Another recommended aid is the foreword written by Richard Dorson for Massignon's *Folktales of France*. It supplies a concise history of the folklore movement in France during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and will help the reader identify many of the scholars cited in this article. A social history of the literary versions of "Little Red Riding Hood," with thirty-five different retellings and a critical introduction, can be found in Jack Zipes's *Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood.*

   Much of the richness of peasant folk tradition in France can only be conveyed adequately through the local dialects or *patois,* which vary so commonly from region to region. This translation of necessity misses such nuances. Here and there I have

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retained the original French expression or included certain terms in parentheses, but most often I have simply sought the most straightforward English rendering. Those readers interested in the valuable linguistic minutiae of this study are obliged to consult Verdier's original article.

2. We will be using the versions assembled by Paul Delarue *(Le conte populaire française* 373–83), tale type 333 of the Aarne and Thompson classification. Beyond the Perrault version, Delarue has assembled thirty-four versions that, with the exception of one Nivernais version, are only summarized in his work. We will use his numbering to designate the different versions in the course of this article. For the versions from the Hautes-Alpes collected more recently, we will refer to Charles Joisten. For the geography of the tale and the versions from Italian Tyrol, see Delarue "Le contes merveilleux." See also Tenèze 133–44.
3. The use of linguistically fixed formulas testifies both to the importance of an episode and to the authentically oral antiquity of the tale, as Tenèze (50) has shown.
4. At least in our tale, since it is found in other stories such as tale type 435, where the heroine departs "in search of her disappeared spouse." She is told that she will find him only after wearing out three pairs of iron shoes or canes. Here the motif relates to the length of the road and the time taken to travel it.
5. Victor Smith collected tales and songs in the Velay and the Forez between 1870 and 1876. His field manuscripts are found at the Institut Catholique de Paris and at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal. In volume 2 of his tales he writes: "I address myself everywhere to the old people, I copy their songs textually, changing nothing, omitting nothing, the oldest words which I do not understand, I reproduce faithfully as I hear them in order to examine their meaning later."
6. Cited by van Gennep (41) with regard to traditional forms for declarations of love.
7. In any case this is what became apparent to us in our study of May rituals consecrated to girls in the Châtillonnais.
8. He seems to sit down at the table with the little girl only in a few rare versions.
9. According to the definition given by Calame-Griaule, "Une affaire de famille" 193.
10. This version is transcribed completely by Delarue, "Les contes merveilleux" 257–58.
11. *Meirineta,* the collector notes, is a diminutive of *meirina,* godmother. The usage would have the grandmother chosen as godmother; the word *meirina* then becomes a synonym for grandmother (Joisten 286; version 48.2).
12. Translator's Note: To be sure Perrault does refer to the wolf as *compère,* whence in A. E. Johnson's translation he becomes "old Father Wolf" (Perrault, "Little Red Riding Hood" 4). This expression may retain some folk flavor, but it is a mistranslation. The French term means "co-father," similar to the Spanish *compadre*, and refers to someone who has sponsored a child at baptism. Perrault is doubtless using it in a more colloquial sense to mean "rascal," and it ought not be construed as a kin term, fictive or otherwise.
13. The name of the werewolf *(loup-garou)* who here plays the role of the wolf, in the Nivernais.
14. This version from the Italian Tyrol is cited by Delarue, "Les contes merveilleux" 255.
15. These proverbs were assembled by Rolland 111–12.
16. From Estienne Pasquier, *Des recherches de la France* (Paris, 1560). Cited by Sébillot 22).

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17. According to the expression of Zvétaieva.
18. Cited as facetiae belonging to the cycle of Little Red Riding Hood by Gaidoz, who takes it from the *Petit Almanach de la Propagation de la Foi* (1893).
19. Or to the mother, in which case it is the girl's employer who provide her with bread and cheese.
20. Curiously the theme of the thread as an escape ruse under pretext of relieving oneself is also found in African tales such as "The Monster of the Ponds" (see Seydou 36). It is likewise found in Asia, as Delarue has shown, citing Chinese, Japanese, and Korean versions presenting the same motif ("Les contes merveilleux" 286–89). These tales, moreover, he would relate to both "Red Riding Hood" and "The Wolf and the Kids."
21. The motif is often associated in other tales with the sow-man as pursuer, as in our Tourangelle version (Tenèze 60).
22. The folk versions *(versions populaires)* that Delarue presents had for the most part remained in manuscript (those of Achille Millien or Victor Smith, who, he says, worked for the literate and educated), while many others were scattered in *Mélusine*.
23. Let us note that popular editions of the complete text of Perrault's stories are very recent.
24. See the analysis by Calame-Griaule, "La calebasse brisée," a study of the initiation theme in some African versions of "The Two Daughters."

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